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SOME REPRINTS FROM OLD BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

THE ILLINOIS RIVER.

The following extract is from *The Western Gazetteer*, by Samuel R. Brown; published at Auburn, New York, in 1817:

The placid Illinois traverses this territory in a southwestern direction, nearly 400 miles. This noble river is formed by the junction of the rivers Theakaki and Plein in north latitude $41^{\circ} 48'$. Unlike the other great rivers of the western country, its current is mild and unbroken by rapids, meandering at leisure through one of the finest countries in the world. It enters the Mississippi about 200 miles above its confluence with the Ohio, and eighteen above the mouth of the Missouri, in $38^{\circ} 42'$ north latitude. Is upwards of 400 yards wide at its mouth, bearing from the Mississippi N. 75 degrees west. The tributaries of this river entering from the north or right bank are, first, The Mine, 70 miles long, falls into the Illinois about 75 miles from its mouth; second, The Sagamond, a crooked river, enters the Illinois 130 miles from the Mississippi. It is 100 yards wide at its entrance, and navigable 150 miles for small crafts—general course southeast; third, Demi Quain, enters 28 miles above the mouth of the Sagamond; its course nearly southeast, and is said to be navigable 120 miles. On the northern bank of this river is an extensive morass called Demi Quain Swamp; fourth Seseme Quain is the next river entering from the northwest, 30 miles above the mouth of the Demi Quain; 60 yards wide and boatable

60 miles. The land on its bank is represented to be of superior excellence; fifth, La Marche, a little river from the north, navigable but a short distance; sixth, Fox river comes in nearly equi-distant between the Illinois lake and the junction of the Plein and Theakaki rivers, is 130 yards wide—heads near the sources of Rocky river (of the Mississippi) and pursues a northeastern course for the first 50 miles, as though making an effort to get into Lake Michigan, approaches to within two miles of Plein river; then takes a southern direction and is navigable 130 miles; seventh, Plein or Kickapoo river, interlocks in a singular manner with the Chicago running into Lake Michigan; sixty miles from its head it expands and forms Lake Depage, five miles below which it joins the Theakaki from the northeast. These streams united, are to the Illinois what the Allegheny and Monongahela are to the Ohio—they water parts of Indiana and the northwest territory.

The rivers of the left bank of the Illinois fall in in the following order: First, The Macopin, a small river, 25 yards wide, 20 miles from the Mississippi, boatable 9 miles to the hills; second, The Little Michillimackinac, 200 miles from the Mississippi; navigable 90 miles, comes from the S. E. It interweaves its branches with the Kaskaskia, and has several considerable forks; third, Crow Meadow river, heads in the Knobs, near the headwaters of the Vermilion (of the Wabash)—its course is N. W.—is but 20 yards wide at its mouth, and navigable about 15 miles; fourth, Vermilion river, from the S. E.—30 yards wide, rocky and navigable; falls into the Illinois 160 miles from the Mississippi, near the S. E. end of Little Rocks; fifth, Rainy Island river, from the S. E., narrow and navigable but a few miles.

“The banks of the Illinois are generally high. The bed of the river being a white marble or clay, or sand; the waters are remarkably clear. It abounds with beautiful islands, one of which is ten miles long; and adjoining

or near it, are many coal mines, salt ponds and small lakes. It passes through one lake, two hundred and ten miles from its mouth, which is twenty miles in length, and three or four miles in breadth, called Illinois Lake.”*

*A late officer of the U. S. Army.

THE FIRST BELL.

(From Illinois Monthly Magazine, December, 1830.)

During the last month, the town of Vandalia received a valuable acquisition, in the donation of a fine toned *bell*, for the cupola of its meeting house; and we notice the subject as well to have an opportunity of expressing our gratitude to the generous donor, as to indulge in some reflections which are awakened by the subject. This bell was presented to the Presbyterian congregation of Vandalia, by Romulous Riggs, Esq., a merchant of Philadelphia, in the name of his infant daughter, *Miss Illinois Riggs; a young lady who is indebted for her name to the partiality of her parents for our new and flourishing state. Mr. Riggs is one of the largest proprietors of land in our “military tract;” and being thus interested in our prosperity, exhibits a praiseworthy degree of public spirit in expending a portion of his wealth in aid of our infant institutions. This bell, which was hung on the 5th day of November, and announced its own arrival in joyous tones, bears the following inscription:

“ILLINOIS RIGGS,
To the Presbyterian Congregation of
Vandalia,
1830.”

This event is interesting, inasmuch as this is the first public bell, introduced into the state by the American in-

*The Secretary of the Illinois State Historical Society will be glad to receive information in regard to the life history of this little “Illinois” girl.